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Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6192nd meeting

Friday, 25 September 2009, 11.20 a.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Rice	(United States of America)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koúdougou
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Japan	Mr. Miyajima
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Gouider
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

Letter dated 22 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2009/487)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 22 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2009/487)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Brazil, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Amorim (Brazil) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in response to a letter dated 22 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, contained in document S/2009/487. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to a letter dated 23 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, which will be issued as document S/2009/491.

At this meeting, the Council will hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Amorim (Brazil): I wish to thank the Security Council for having promptly granted the request of the Brazilian Government for the convening of this urgent meeting.

As Council members are aware, President José Manuel Zelaya of Honduras has taken shelter, together with family members and his closest advisers, at the chancellery of the Brazilian Embassy in Tegucigalpa since Monday, 21 September. President Zelaya arrived at the Embassy peacefully and by his own means. He was received in his legitimate capacity as constitutional President of Honduras. He remains there under the protection of the Brazilian Embassy.

As soon as I learned of President Zelaya's arrival at the Embassy, I called him personally, on the instructions of President Lula. He told me that he had gone back to his country with the aim of returning to power by peaceful means and through dialogue. Since then, I have had no reason to doubt his words.

Since the day that the Brazilian Embassy first sheltered President Zelaya on its premises, the Embassy has been virtually under siege. It has been subjected to acts of harassment and intimidation by the de facto authorities. Electricity, water supply and phone connections were cut off. Cell phone communications were blocked or interfered with. Disruptive sound equipment was installed in front of the Embassy. Access to food was severely restricted at some point. The circulation of official vehicles of the Brazilian Embassy was curtailed.

The Chargé d'affaires of Brazil has, in practice, been prevented from moving from the chancellery to the residence, since the police have announced that anyone leaving the Embassy premises will not be allowed to return. In fact, the wife of the Chargé d'affaires, who left the premises, was not allowed to come back. These measures by the de facto authorities clearly violate obligations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

I recall that the International Court of Justice established long ago the inviolability of diplomatic missions as a standing principle of international relations, to be respected in all circumstances, including a breach of diplomatic relations or even war.

I wish to thank the Governments, organizations and groups that provided means to alleviate the siege of the Brazilian Embassy or expressed their condemnation of the actions taken against the Embassy.

The Brazilian Government is gravely concerned that the same people who perpetrated the coup d'état in Honduras might threaten the inviolability of the Embassy in order to forcefully arrest President Zelaya.

That is not mere suspicion or speculation; concrete indications of this possibility have been received.

First, the decision was taken to send a bailiff to the Embassy with a search warrant. Of course, the Brazilian officials refused to receive the warrant, and the bailiff was not allowed to enter our premises. The regime also made a change in the formal treatment of the Embassy, by which they seemed to imply that it had ceased to enjoy diplomatic status. In addition to making public statements to the same effect, the de facto Government sent a communication directly to the Ministry of External Relations, in which it referred to our Embassy as "one of the facilities that the Brazilian Government still maintains in Tegucigalpa". Of course, all of this seemed to be a prelude to further action.

In a public communiqué, the de facto authorities even tried to deny responsibility for the safety of President Zelaya and for damage to property in the Embassy's neighbourhood. That is in total contradiction with the Vienna Convention and, more immediately, with the recent ruling by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights that the de facto Government of Honduras must not threaten the safety and security of President Zelaya or any of those sheltered at the Brazilian Embassy.

It is imperative to ensure that the regime in Honduras fully respects and complies with the Vienna Convention regarding the Brazilian Embassy, in particular its inviolability and the security of its personnel and other people within its premises. Brazil categorically rejects all threats against our Embassy and against the safety of President Zelaya and all those under our protection.

I understand that, by calling this meeting, the Security Council recognizes that the situation of the Embassy of Brazil in Honduras constitutes a threat to the peace and security of our region. Any action against the Embassy of Brazil, its personnel or the people under our protection must therefore be considered a flagrant breach of security.

My country supports dialogue based on the relevant resolutions of the Organization of American States and the efforts made by President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica. Brazil is a firm supporter of the United Nations Charter. It is also a firm supporter of democracy and of the peaceful settlement of disputes. As such, it could not deny protection to a democratically elected President recognized by the entire international community as the only legitimate ruler of Honduras.

A clear statement from the Security Council would certainly serve as a deterrent against the further aggravation of this crisis. It would also be a sign of support for the diplomatic efforts of the international community aimed at the peaceful and speedy restoration of President Zelaya to power.

We sincerely hope that today's meeting is duly understood in Honduras as a sign that acts of disrespect against the Embassy of Brazil must cease immediately. It is our opinion that the Council should remain seized of this matter as long as that does not happen.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.